

Report for: Cabinet - 11 November 2025

Item number: 14

Title: Adult Social Care Improvement Plan

Report authorised by : Sara Sutton, Corporate Director, Adults, Housing and Health

Lead Officer: Jo Baty, Director of Adult Social Services

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Key Decision

1.0 Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. Its role is to ensure that care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, and high-quality care, and to encourage improvement across the system. In 2023, CQC introduced a new single assessment framework which extends its regulatory oversight to include local authorities, assessing how effectively they discharge their duties under the Care Act 2014.
- 1.2 Haringey was inspected in October 2024, and the report was published on 5th February 2025. Overall Haringey was rated 'requires improvement' (with an overall score of 57%). However, areas of strength were evidenced in Safeguarding and Partnerships and Communities, which were rated as good.
- 1.3 This report sets out our Improvement Plan that aims to build on the progress made to date by providing a clear, phased approach to strengthening the service and embedding sustainable improvement. Implementation of the Plan will be overseen by a new cross-Party Adults Improvement Board which will be chaired by the council's Chief Executive. The council will draw on external expertise to ensure appropriate check and challenge is built into the improvement journey.
- 1.4 It is important to note that the improvements required are in the context of the council's significant financial challenges. These have the potential to both impact the delivery of this Improvement Plan as well as being a driver for change. Over recent years Adult Social Care has been an area of significant spending pressure for the council due to increases in demand and rising costs. This has been one of the major drivers for the council requiring Exceptional Financial Support to balance its budget for 2024/25 and 2025/26. As the council works hard to achieve its financial recovery there will be a need to ensure excellent value for money in this area. Some of the measures in this plan which aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both processes and Service delivery will bring much needed productivity improvements alongside improvements to resident experience.
- 1.5 Financial pressures demographic growth, increased demand and provider market challenges are all placing additional demands on our workforce. Hence, this Improvement Plan will also align with a Workforce Development Strategy which will support staff retention and resilience.

2.0 Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 Adult Social Care often interacts with people at some of the most challenging and complex moments of their life. Navigating these complex moments can be extremely stressful for residents and families, and sometimes very complex for those providing the support. That is why it is so important that we deliver care and support to a good standard. We welcome CQC's feedback as it provides us with the opportunity to reflect on how we can improve the services and support we provide. Something we are fully committed to doing.
- 2.2 As we respond to ever growing need in the borough, driven by our ageing population and the impact of long-term health and wellbeing on care demand, we are committed to delivering real improvements. We are clear-eyed about what is needed and thoroughly committed to making it happen.
- 2.3 The Adult Social Care Improvement Plan sets out the council's path to addressing the feedback we received from CQC over the next three years. It sets out a really practical set of actions that we will take - working alongside residents, families, carers, and staff - to deliver services in a way that best supports our residents to live independent and fulfilling lives. The journey will be overseen and scrutinised by our new cross-party Adults Improvement Board (AIB), which is chaired by the council's Chief Executive.

3.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked:

- 3.1 To note the findings in the CQC Assessment report as set out in Appendix 1 and the summary of findings in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 To approve the Improvement Plan as set out in Appendix 3.
- 3.3 To note the establishment of the cross-party, Adult Social Care (ASC) improvement Board (AIB) that serves as the central governance mechanism for overseeing delivery of the ASC Improvement Plan.
- 3.4 To note that the Improvement Plan will be subsequently presented to the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, with updates to the Panel going forward to evidence continuous improvement.
- 3.5 To note that the Improvement Plan is live document and will be subject to regular changes and updates. Any significant changes will be approved by the AIB.
- 3.6 To note the progress made to date, as outlined in section 10 of this report.

4.0 Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The council has a critical role in supporting support adults —particularly those who are older, disabled, or vulnerable — to live as independently, safely, and well as possible. It is essential that the council provides a good service to our residents and to their carers, and in doing so complies with all regulatory and statutory duties. Residents need to be assured that the council is committed to improving its services, that it has a clear plan to do so, is holding itself accountable and is accountable to residents, stakeholders and staff.
- 4.2 Alternative options considered

Alternative options include not implementing an Improvement Plan. However, a clear plan

is required to ensure and monitor continuous improvement and compliance with statutory responsibilities is essential

5.0 Background information

5.1 In 2023, CQC introduced their new assessment framework for local authority assurance. The framework assesses four overarching themes and within those themes, nine quality statements and uses evidence from multiple sources, including people's experiences, performance data, and direct engagement with staff and partners, to form the inspection outcome.

The four overarching themes are:

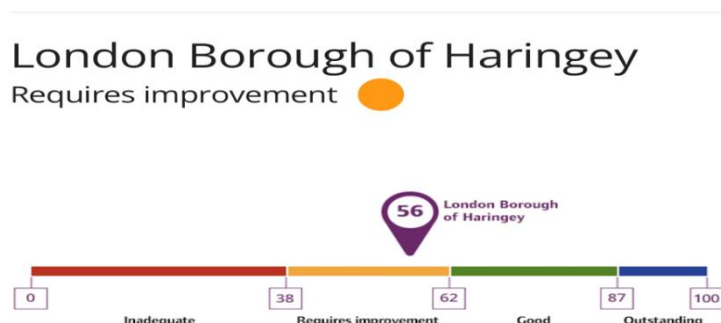
- Working with People
- Providing Support
- Ensuring Safety
- Leadership

The nine quality statements are:

- Assessing needs
- Supporting people to lead healthier lives
- Equity in experience and outcomes
- Care provision, integration and continuity
- Partnerships and communities
- Safe pathways, systems and transitions
- Safeguarding

5.2 To inform their findings the inspection team reviewed data and other documentation submitted by the council via an information return and detailed self-assessment. Alongside this they considered people's experience directly by engaging with a small group of residents receiving care and support and some carers. Feedback was also received from staff, leaders and partners.

Haringey was inspected in October 2024, and the report was published on 5th February 2025. Overall, Haringey was rated as 'Requires improvement' rating, with an assessment score of 56. The scale of the rating is indicated by the graphic below, with the table setting out the scoring per theme:



Theme	Area	Score
How the local authority works with people	1. Assessing people's needs	2
	2. Supporting people to lead	2
		2

	3.	healthier lives Equity in experience and outcomes	
Providing support	4.	Care provision, integration and continuity of care	2
	5.	Partnerships and communities	3
How the local authority ensures safety in the system	6.	Safe pathways, systems and transitions	2
	7.	Safeguarding	3
Leadership	8.	Governance, management and sustainability	2
	9.	Learning, improvement and innovation	2

Scoring key:

1. Evidence shows significant shortfalls
2. Evidence shows some shortfalls
3. Evidence shows a good standard
4. Evidence shows an exceptional standard

5.3 CQC identifies a number of areas for improvement which are detailed as part of our Improvement Plan. However, it is important to highlight that several areas of strength were also identified in the report. These include:

- Adult Social Care is embedded into wider local authority plans and strategies to support prevention
- Safeguarding processes are generally strong, and person-centered
- Referral pathway arrangements supported coordinated approaches across different agencies and services
- Integrated teams (e.g. Multi Agency Care Coordination Team) reduced hospital admissions and support independence
- Reablement services are efficient and well-rated
- Senior leaders understood the impact of inequalities across the borough and worked closely with key partners to better understand and reduce local health inequalities
- Strong partnerships in place and the service worked collaboratively with partners to agree and align strategic priorities, plans and responsibilities for people in the area
- Partnerships with Voluntary Community Sector and Health bodies are improving
- Clear arrangements in place to monitor the quality and impact of the care and support services being commissioned
- Care providers said quality assurance processes supported them to improve their systems and practices
- Leadership is visible, compassionate, and committed to transformation
- Workforce development and training opportunities are robust
- We are working closely with peers to support and improve their practice and within the North Central London system to retain oversight of residential and nursing care provision across the system.

6.0 Introduction to the Improvement Plan

- 6.1 The ASC Improvement Plan sets out what we will do to improve communication and service delivery to residents; to improve efficiency and performance; and to ensure regulatory compliance. Our improvement plan sets out a clear roadmap over the next three years, with prioritised actions in the areas that will have the greatest impact on outcomes, quality, and financial sustainability.
- 6.2 It is recognised that aligned to the areas which CQC highlighted, we also need to improve 'getting the basics right' across the service. All of which, require a culture of individual and collective accountability, minimum standards in how we communicate with our residents, a performance culture that enhances the sense of pride in being part of Adult Social Care in Haringey.

7.0 Year One Objectives of the ASC Improvement Plan

- 7.1 The first year of the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan is focused on consolidating progress and setting a strong foundation for ongoing improvement. This initial phase has concentrated on the priorities identified as essential to strengthening services and achieving sustainable outcomes for residents. Our key objectives for the first 12-months will focus on ten priority areas for action:

Priority one: Improving waiting times for assessments and reviews – review and streamline the ‘front door’ to Adult Social Care, streamlining how we use digital technology and training our staff so that all residents get a timely, compassionate and professional service on first point of contact.

Priority two: Improve Information, Advice and Guidance, communications and responsiveness – working as part of wider Council transformation to enable residents get what they need to understand, navigate, and make informed decisions about their care and support options (including Advocacy).

Priority three: Strengthening our leadership capacity to support delivery of the improvement plan and implement our workforce planning approach to ensure the right balance of resources to manage service demand

Priority four: Building upon our local offer of care and support in Haringey – working with stakeholders and our residents to identify gaps and seize opportunities to do more locally, be it in context of Day Services or Supported Living, as examples. We will revisit our Market Position statement as part of this.

Priority five: Reviewing how we further embed co-production across the Service, not only with our residents, but with stakeholders and providers of care and support, including strengthening the work with the Joint Partnership Board and its’ reference groups

Priority six: Conduct an Independent Review of how we fulfil our statutory safeguarding functions to provide an objective assessment of current arrangements, identify further areas for improvement, and inform future Service development.

Priority seven: Improving complaint handling and embedding learning from complaints – de-escalating at the earliest opportunity, leading to a reduction in numbers of complaints, and a reduction in complaints which escalate to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Priority eight: Launching and implementing our co-produced Carers Strategy to transform and improve the offer for unpaid Carers across the borough, recognising their essential role and providing tailored resources, support and guidance to sustain their wellbeing and contribution.

Priority nine: Further embedding our Locality-based approach working side by side with NHS and voluntary and community sector partners in our Neighbourhoods to ensure together we can best meet the needs of our residents, including signposting residents earlier to community led support where it is appropriate to prevent escalation of need.

Priority ten: Implementing a Workforce Development Strategy to support and further develop talent and improve staff wellbeing which will support staff retention and resilience.

7.2 Critical to our success is ensuring we deliver Value for Money (VfM): across all areas of improvement, prioritising expenditure that best meets the needs of our residents eligible for care and support.

8.0 Governance and Monitoring

8.1 The Adult Social Care (ASC) Improvement Board (AIB) was established post CQC Inspection outcome in March 2025 to oversee, provide a steer, monitor and provide advice to officers on actions in relation to the ASC Improvement Plan.

- 8.2 The AIB comprises of cross-party membership and meets every 8 weeks to monitor progress against the Improvement Plan. The terms of reference for the board can be found in Appendix 4.
- 8.3 The Adults Improvement Board (AIB) will serve as the central governance mechanism for overseeing delivery of the ASC Improvement Plan.
- 8.4 The Improvement Plan is also presented to Cabinet by way of this report and will subsequently be presented to the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, with a recommendation that annual updates are formally submitted to Scrutiny thereafter. In addition, we are developing proposals for engaging our residents, key partners and wider stakeholders in our improvement journey.

9.0 Overarching key risks are:

- 9.1 Workforce – balancing resourcing and capacity across managing increased levels of demand.
- 9.2 The need for clarity on roles and responsibilities around Service Improvement and the leadership and operational team needed.
- 9.3 The council's financial challenges may risk affecting delivery of some of these projects and lead to a need for some key areas of improvement to be delayed or curtailed.
- 9.4 Resident engagement and co-production to ensure the voice of those in receipt of care and support from Adult Social Care, and their Carers, is central to service improvement.
- 9.5 Market/provider failure and associated availability of local care and support provision to assist the Council in delivering the Improvement Plan.

10 Progress made to date

- 10.1 We have established a new Adults, Housing and Health Directorate bringing together these services aims to ensure a more joined-up and integrated approach to supporting vulnerable residents.
- 10.2 Since April 2025, a new Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health and a new Director of Adult Social Care have been in post, providing stable, refreshed leadership to drive forward the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan.
- 10.3 We have also recruited a new Head of Integrated Care and an Interim Principal Social Worker. We will also shortly be recruiting into a Deputy Director of Adult Social Services role and bolstering our commissioning capacity to ensure we have the leadership and commissioning resilience required to deliver our improvement ambitions.
- 10.4 New internal governance arrangements have been implemented by the Adult and Health Board, strengthening oversight and supporting coordinated delivery of improvements.
- 10.5 A new Safeguarding Adult Board Chair is now in place, providing refreshed oversight and leadership in safeguarding practice.

- 10.6 External assurance and support have been brought in to strengthen key areas of the Directorate's work, including:
- An independent review of the Localities operating model, providing valuable insights and recommendations that will support the development of a new target operating model for ASC. The first phase of this work will see the Connected Communities team integrated into ASC to become a new Independence and Early Intervention Service from November 2025.
 - Specialist support from independent organisations in thematic areas such as financial assessments, ASC front door redesign, transitions, and demand management/forecasting.
- 10.7 A workforce planning approach is being implemented to ensure the right balance of resources against service demand, retaining expertise and supporting sustainable service delivery.
- 10.8 With Carers, we co-produced our Carers Strategy and as part of that journey have led Health and Well-being Event, celebrated Carer and Dementia Action Week, launched our Carer Hospital Toolkit. We plan to launch our Carers Strategy at Carers Rights Day in November.
- 10.9 The Directorate continues to support and deepen its community connections, including attending community networks and supporting initiatives such as the Age Well Festival, a collaborative effort led by the voluntary and community sector.
- 10.10 The Service has been proactive in building trust and developing stronger relationships with the NHS. We are working closely on improving ways of working in our Neighbourhoods, to reduce hospital admissions and as part of this we have also implemented a new Memorandum of Understanding with our Mental Health Trust.
- 10.11 We continue to grow our and embed our approach to co-production and via our commissioning Co-production Board and have reached out to Leaders within our 'seldom heard' communities to begin to develop trust and to hear what would make us more accessible and inclusive as a Service.
- 10.12 Referral pathways have been redesigned and the front door and safeguarding operating model have been strengthened and new processes have been implemented to manage complaints and ombudsman cases, ensuring more effective handling and improved responsiveness.
- 10.13 We worked hard to demonstrate leadership and commitment to the Review of the Joint Partnership Board, recruited an Interim Chair, and will continue to work with the JPB to ensure it plays a vital role not only in informing and overseeing the improvements in ASC, but in the wider Council and NHS. The review of the JPB and the co-produced recommendations was presented to scrutiny in September 2026.
- 10.14 Hosted two sessions with our commissioned providers of Homecare, Nursing, Residential and Supported Living to improve relationships and trust and explore avenues for market development and integrated workforce activities.
- ~~10.15 Brought our staff together around the Workforce Race Equality Scheme to hear their experience of working in Haringey and identify what would build trust and enable us to grow and retain staff across the Service.~~

11.0 Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes

- 11.1 The confirmed continued improvements and reviews contribute to Theme 4 of the Corporate Delivery Plan – Adults, Health and Welfare specifically the vision of a borough where every adult in our community gets the support they need to live a good life, no matter what challenges they may face.

12.0 Statutory Officer Comments

12.1 Finance

- 12.1.1 The net annual investment in Adult Social Care of £105.2m in 2025/26. It is anticipated that further investment is required to reflect both the demand and cost of services to individuals with eligible needs and support investment in staffing capacity to meet the increasing demand on the service to that end the budget will be increased by £5.6m as approved in the MTFS 2025/26 with a further net investment of £9.5m in draft budget proposals contained in the MTFS for 2026/27. With £3.6m specifically invested in staffing capacity.

12.2 Procurement

- 12.2.1 Strategic Procurement has been consulted on and notes the content of this report. There are no immediate procurement ramifications

12.3 Head of Legal & Governance

- 12.3.1 The Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the drafting of this report and has no further comments.

12.4 Equality

- 12.4.1 The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

- 12.4.2 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

- 12.4.3. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

- 12.4.4 The report and decision are regarding the approval of the attached Adult Social Care Improvement Plan as set out in Appendix 1. This Plan sets out how we will improve the council's delivery of statutory functions under the Care Act 2014 and act upon areas for improvement identified in the CQC Inspection of Adult Social Care Report February 2025.

12.4.5 Haringey's Adult Social Care Improvement Plan has the potential to positively advance equalities by addressing systemic barriers and improving access to high-quality care for individuals with protected characteristics who are disproportionately represented in adult social care. This includes older adults, disabled people, and those with long-term health conditions, as well as individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds who may face cultural or language barriers in accessing services. The plan will help reduce inequalities in care outcomes, promote dignity and independence, and ensure that services are responsive to diverse needs across age, disability, race, gender, and other protected characteristics.

12.4.6 Significant actions in the plan will be screened for their potential equalities impact. Where necessary, detailed Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) will be conducted to identify risks and mitigate unintended consequences. This approach will help embed fairness and accountability throughout the implementation process, ensuring that improvements benefit all target residents.

Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 – CQC Report

Appendix 2 – CQC Summary Findings

Appendix 3 - Adult Social Care Improvement Plan

Appendix 4 – Adults Improvement Board Terms of Reference
